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NO. 36.

From Foreign Minister Shidehara
to Minister Shigemitsu in China

Dispatched in the afternoon, 21.9.1931.

Telegram No. 372 (Cipher, strictly confidential, urgent)

The line of policy to settle the incident in Manchuria.

With reference to your telegram No. 984;

We herewith request you to state to Mr. T. V. Soong urgently that the Japanese Government entirely share his opinion that paramount importance should be attached to the necessity of alleviating the intensity of the atmosphere by informing the world quickly of our immediate action to settle the matter, in order to prevent the Sino-Japanese relations from being thrown into a chaotic condition through the present incident, and to transmit the following to him as the opinion of the Japanese Government in reply to his proposal. Your reply is awaited.

Taking the fundamental factors of the present political situation into full consideration, we have no doubt that the recent incident has been occasioned by a casual happening breaking loose the disagreeable atmosphere existing in the relations of both nations, and made tense and stuffy during the past score of years. If steps are not to be taken to alleviate this disagreeable atmos-

phere to a marked degree, the root of evil will inevitably be left to a future day. Upon this general point of view, therefore, the proposed Sino-Japanese commission should aim as its chief objective not only at a settlement of the present incident, but also at finding agreement on basic principles, necessary to prevent similar incidents from recurring, thus turning the present misfortune into a blessing. This objective is by no means easy to attain, but we believe firmly that it is not impossible, if the authorities of both countries take up the matter with sincerity and resolution. If Mr. T. V. Soong agrees, the Japanese Government is happy, in this sense, to accept his proposal to set up a commission.

Reported to Peiping and Mukden.

Please report to Nanking.